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RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND PRACTICE IN VĀIKHĀNASA VIṢṆUIISM¹

By J. GONDA

I

The question as to how many individuals in one of the religious communities of ancient and modern India at a given historical moment understood all the meanings and implications of their traditional ritual symbolism may to a considerable extent be irrelevant,² but the relation between religious practice and the philosophical or theological doctrines underlying it is of outstanding interest. Whereas we are, as far as this relation between thought and practice in Vedic religion is concerned, placed in favourable circumstances because the Brāhmaṇas explaining the thought solve many problems arising from a study of the sūtras describing the ritual acts, ritual texts compiled in the Hindu period, and even those which originated in the centuries of transition, often force us to apply modified methods of investigating these connexions. A special importance attaches to those documents, which, from one point of view that is often shared by the indigenous tradition, may be regarded as late representatives of Vedism, and from another as early products of Hinduism characterized by the prominence of other gods and the appearance of other cults.³ Among these texts those issuing from the religious community of the Vāikhānasas, which, as a small but important group, continues to exist in the South of India,⁴ are of special interest because they embody the tradition of a society of Indian devotees which at first constituted a Vedic school belonging to the Taittirīya branch of the Black Yajurveda, and in the transitional period and the centuries after came to transform itself into a community of devout worshippers of Viṣṇu.

Although, like the other Viṣṇuites and the Śivāites, they completely conform to the ritual practices of Hinduism such as *pūjā*, image and temple worship, various festivals, etc., they claim to have clung to Vedic orthodoxy⁵ because

¹ Abbreviations used: *AtB*—*Āitareyabrāhmaṇa*; *ĀnandaS*—*Ānandasamhitā*; *Āp.*—*Āpastamba*; *ĀpDhS*—*Āpastambadharmasūtra*; *ĀpGS*—*Āpastambagrhyasūtra*; *ĀpŚS*—*Āpastambaśrautasūtra*; *ĀśvGS*—*Āśvalāyanagrhyasūtra*; *AtriS*—*Atrīsamhitā*; *B*—*Baudhāyana*; *BĀU*—*Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*; *BGS*—*Baudhāyanagrhyasūtra*; *BhG*—*Bhagavadgītā*; *BPS*—*Baudhāyanapitrmedhasūtra*; *ChU*—*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*; *G*—*Gobhila*; *GB*—*Gopathabrāhmaṇa*; *HGS*—*Hiranyakeśigrhyasūtra*; *Hir.*—*Hiranyakeśin*; *K*—*Kāṭiya*; *KāśyS*—*Kāśyapasamhitā*; *KauṣU*—*Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad*; *KB*—*Kauṣītakibrāhmaṇa*; *Kh.*—*Khādīra*; *KS*—*Kāṭhaka-samhitā*; *MahāNU*—*Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*; *MānAnugS*—*Mānava Anugrāhikasūtra*; *MāndU*—*Māndūkya Upaniṣad*; *MatsyaP*—*Matsyapurāṇa*; *MS*—*Maitrāyaṇīyasamhitā*; *MŚS*—*Mānavaśrautasūtra*; *P*—*Pāraskara*; *ParāśaraS*—*Parāśarasamhitā*; *PB*—*Pañcaviṃśabrāhmaṇa*; *RV*—*Rgveda*; *RVKh.*—*Rgvedakhila*; *Sāṅkh.*—*Sāṅkhāyana*; *SB*—*Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa*; *ŚGS*—*Sāṅkhāyanagrhyasūtra*; *SvU*—*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*; *TĀ*—*Taittirīya Aranyaka*; *TB*—*Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa*; *TS*—*Taittirīyasamhitā*; *VaikhS*—*Vāikhānasasamhitā*; *VaikhSms*—*Vāikhānasasmārtasūtra*; *VāsDhS*—*Vāsiṣṭhadharmasūtra*; *ViṣṇuP*—*Viṣṇupurāṇa*; *ViṣṇuS*—*Viṣṇusmṛti*; *VS*—*Vājasaneyīsamhitā*; *Yājñ.*—*Yājñavalkyasmṛti*.

² I refer to M. Eliade, *The quest*, Chicago, 1969, 21.

³ I may, for reasons of space, refer to my book *Die Religionen Indiens*, I, Stuttgart, 1960, 214 ff., esp. 217.

⁴ For details see W. Caland, *Over het Vāikhānasasūtra*, Amsterdam Acad., 1926; *idem*, *On the sacred books of the Vāikhānasas*, *ibid.*, 1928; *idem*, *Vāikhānasasmārtasūtram*, Calcutta, 1929, introduction; T. Goudriaan, *Kāśyapa's book of wisdom*, Utrecht, 1965, introduction, 7 ff.; J. Gonda, *Medieval religious literature in Sanskrit*, Wiesbaden, 1977, ch. ix.

⁵ The twice-born man who does not study the Veda is to be excluded from all religious acts (*VaikhSms* 6, 11).

they have maintained Vedic traditions,⁶ or, as one of their authorities has it, because their cult is mixed up with the four Vedas (*AtriS* 78, 3). And, in fact, this is the main point on which they stand out against other Viṣṇuite groups, especially the Pāñcarātrins, whom they regard as Tāntric and secondary. Their own chief Viṣṇuite service, also called the Śrī doctrine, should be performed in villages, etc., the secondary in the forest and in times of distress; one should avoid any confusion of these cults (*KāśyS* 105; *AtriS* 65, 114 ff.; 78, 1; 5; 8 ff.; 64 f.). The performance of ritual functions belonging to the teacher, the temple priest, or the officiant by persons not versed in the Veda is fruitless (*ibid.* 78, 31 f.; cf. 64 f.). The aversion to this ritual confusion which must have been a point of doctrine emerges from passing observations such as *AtriS* 78, 62 f.: Those wicked persons who, through folly or ignorance, wish to engage followers of a different doctrine as officiants on a place for Vaikhānasa worship go to Hell. Those Brahmans who have undergone the ceremonies (*samskāras*) of impregnation, etc. according to the Vaikhānasa doctrine are Viṣṇuites belonging to Soma (of the Soma variety); those who follow the Pāñcarātra methods and who have undergone the *samskāras* according to the handbooks of Baudhāyana, etc. belong to Agni (*AtriS* 65, 122 ff.).

This evolution is reflected in and attested to by a body of literature, the oldest components of which, the sūtra texts, may date back to about A.D. 350. The sūtra work containing 32 chapters mainly comprises (in this unusual order!) a *smārta* (*gṛhya* and *dharma*) part, which forms a whole, and a *śrauta* part, which must, in fact, have been compiled probably by another author and at a later date than the preceding chapters. The *Śrautasūtra* is on the whole much more dependent on older texts, especially on the *Śrautasūtras* of Āpastamba and Hiranyakeśin which are for the greater part identical. Whereas, moreover, the *Śrautasūtra* as a rule presupposes the *Samhitā* and *Brāhmaṇa* of the Taittirīyas,⁷ the *Smārtasūtra* does not only *pratīkena*⁸ refer to mantras which are included in these Taittirīya texts, but in a considerable number of cases also to mantras which do not occur there. This anomaly became understandable when the *Vaikhānasaśāstrasamhitā* or *Mantrapraśna* came to light.⁹ This collection of mantras, without which the sūtra cannot be completely understood, and which for the greater part agrees with the texts of the Taittirīyas, consists of four chapters containing the mantras which—‘relating to the worshipper’s bodily welfare’—are *pratīkena* quoted in the *Gṛhyasūtra*, and four chapters ‘relating to God’, i.e. to Viṣṇu’s *pūjā*: its *Arcanakhaṇḍa* is attributed to the ṛṣi Kāśyapa. Kāśyapa’s work—or rather a work comprising the ritual doctrines of a definite Vaikhānasa ‘school’ or tradition—is indeed a handbook of religious practice¹⁰ which is in any case about five centuries younger than the sūtra texts. Similar works are attributed to Atri, Bhṛgu, and Marici,¹¹ i.e. compilers who occasionally refer to each other (e.g. *AtriS* 78, 60 f.).

In contradistinction to the tradition handed down by Mahādeva in the

⁶ See e.g. K. R. Venkataraman, in H. Bhattacharyya (ed.), *The cultural heritage of India*, iv, second ed., Calcutta, 1956, 160 ff.

⁷ See also Raghu Vira, ‘Mantra index’, in W. Caland (ed.), *Vaikhānasa-śrautasūtram* (Bibliotheca Indica, Work No. 265, Issue No. 1547), Calcutta, 1941.

⁸ In the literature it is usual to quote mantras occurring in the *Samhitā* or *Brahmaṇa* to which a text attaches itself by their opening words (*pratīka* only).

⁹ Edition: *Vaikhānasagranthamālā*, 7 and 14, Madras, 1920.

¹⁰ The *Jñānakāṇḍa*, a name used also for the whole *Kāśyapasamhitā* (two other parts of which have not been found) was edited by R. Pārthasārathi Bhattacharya, Tirupati, 1948, and translated by Goudriaan, op. cit.

¹¹ For particulars, editions etc., see Goudriaan, op. cit., introduction. The *Atrisamhitā* is being translated by C. van der Burg (Utrecht).

introduction to his commentary on Hiranyakeśin's *Śrautasūtra* and in the main confirmed by modern research, according to which the *Vaikhānasaśūtras* are, chronologically, the last of the six ritual *sūtras* belonging to the Taittirīya branch, the *Vaikhānasaśūtras* themselves hold other, and untenable, views of the age of their texts and the origin of their community. Its mythical or legendary founder, Vikhanas, is highly extolled. Being created by Viṣṇu himself, when even Brahmā was unable to give the world a sage of high standing,¹² he is almost regarded as the god's equal.¹³ As an emanation from Viṣṇu and the efficient cause of the universe he has proclaimed the *sūtra* texts,¹⁴ which, being the first of all *sūtras*, follow the sacred revelation (*śruti*). In deviation from the purāṇic tradition¹⁵ according to which the Veda was divided by Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana (Vyāsa) into four, the *Vaikhānasaśūtras* believe that the whole of it was before that division taught by Viṣṇu himself to Vikhanas. The unmistakable points of agreement with other texts, especially with the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra*, are explained as borrowings on the part of the latter. It is emphasized that the sole cause of the universe, viz. Nārāyaṇa, who is identical with the transcendent Brahman, the absolute One and the Highest Soul (*AtriS* 1, 6), and who, in the beginning, revealed the true nature of both Viṣṇuite cults, the *Vaikhānasa* and the *Pāñcarātra*, to Vikhanas (*ibid.* 78, 2),¹⁶ is the highest authority and those who follow the rules of conduct laid down in the *Vaikhānasaśūtra* are dearest to the Lord.

According to the same tradition the above ṛṣis, Kāśyapa, etc., were pupils of Vikhanas, who had, at Viṣṇu's command, called them into existence in order to assist him. The doctrines ascribed to them constitute a consistent system of Viṣṇuite belief and practice founded on the ultimate authority of the Vedic revelation. 'When Kāśyapa was sitting in his hermitage, the seer who knew the complete Veda (by heart), . . . the sages asked him which deity man has to worship in order to reach the highest abode (*paramaṃ padam* : *RV* 1, 22, 20). He answered : "Man has to worship Viṣṇu, the Lord of gods, according to a method which is in harmony with the Scriptures, with formulas of the Veda, in order to reach that highest abode of Viṣṇu" ' (*KāśyS* 1). In accordance with this dogma the *Vaikhānasaśūtras* are fully convinced that their temple worship is nothing but a continuation of the Vedic fire sacrifice. They justify their ritual by the doctrine that 'the regular worship of Viṣṇu, performed according to the right method in a temple, grants the results of the sacrifice into the fire, even for people who do not maintain their fires, in the same way as that sacrifice' (*ibid.*). Hence also statements such as *AtriS* 65, 29 : 'If the flowers regularly offered, out of devotion to Viṣṇu, are of superior fragrance, the reward surpasses that of the *Aśvamedha*'. That is not to say that they reject the fire ritual ; on the contrary, ritual is twofold, viz. the offering of oblations into the sacral fire without the visible god, i.e. without images, and worship with images of God (*samūrtā* : *AtriS* 1, 28 f.). 'The theologians say : "He, whose temple worship of Viṣṇu remains always in existence as his fire-sacrifice (*agnihotram*) will go to Viṣṇu's highest place" ' (*viṣṇoḥ paramaṃ padam*, *KāśyS* 90). Hence the incorporation, in the *Gṛhyasūtra*, of a fire cult (1, 8 ff.) as well as the worship of Viṣṇu-in-an-image in a temple or private house (*AtriS* 4, 10 ff.), the latter being obligatory at the close of the regular domestic rite in the fire (4, 10). Deliberate attempts were even made to show that worship of the visible god

¹² Marici, *Ānandasamhitā*, 15.

¹⁴ Caland, *Sacred books*, 7.

¹⁶ According to Marici, *Vimānārcanakaṭpa*, ch. 97, Vikhanas received this knowledge from Viṣṇu (similarly, *AtriS* 31, 58) ; according to ch. 96, however, from Brahmā.

¹³ Caland, *Sacred books*, 6.

¹⁵ cf. e.g. *ViṣṇuP* 3, 4, 1 ff.

had not only begun in the Vedic period, but was a transformation of the ancient shapeless (*amūrtā*) worship. The 'five deities representing the Highest Being', its five aspects, viz. Viṣṇu (i.e. God as the all-pervading One), Puruṣa (God as the principle of life), Satya (God as static, unlimited and beginningless existence), Acyuta (the changeless one), and Aniruddha (God as the One who cannot be restricted, limited, or reduced), are regarded as the four Vedas incarnating the first God Viṣṇu, and therefore as representing the five sacral Agnis, viz. Gārhapatya, Āhavanīya, Dakṣiṇāgni, <Anvāhārya,> and Sabhya, so that the *pañcamūrti* adoration gradually developed from the Vedic Agni worship.¹⁷

So the conception of Viṣṇu's fivefold manifestation is a direct continuation of the Vedic idea of the fivefold sacrificial fire. Nay, both forms of worship and the ideas underlying them were even amalgamated. In performing the *āghāra* (libations of melted butter preceding each sacrifice) one executes the relevant acts for each of the five fires while invoking not only the deities of the respective fires but also God's five manifestations. The fivefoldness of this act is (*KāśyS* 63) explicitly based on *TB* 1, 2, 1, 27: 'The Virāj, when emanated from Prajāpati, surpassed the fires fivefold' and the description furnished by the *Vaiikhānasa-sūtra* (1, 13; 15) is taken as a starting-point of the argument (cf. also *AtriS* 6, 16), although neither the fivefold fire nor the correlation with the manifestations is mentioned there. The doctrinal and ritual significance of these facts was very well understood by the Vaikhānasa authors themselves: 'Just as the Agnihotra oblation into the fire, which is unique, is performed fivefold with respect to the pits, directions of the universe, names, and formulae . . ., so this fivefold worship of the Lord of the gods, who is also unique, with respect to the directions of the universe, inner (temple) halls, manifestations, names, and formulae, and different modes of action, will lead to appeasement' (*KāśyS* 77). The method for the worship of the fivefold manifestation of the Lord is in the same chapter explicitly said to be a fivefold representation of the sole Primeval Manifestation. This belief is reflected in the ritual details such as the construction of sanctuaries, the position of the images, etc.

Adherence to the Veda and a true realization of continuity are also apparent from *AtriS* 1, 38 f.: 'Four precepts based on the four Vedas have been proclaimed by four sages by formulae sprung from the four Vedas. Conferring success in the four periods of life for the prosperity of the four classes they are an expedient for obtaining *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*. The chasm between the fourfoldness of the Veda and the fivefold Vaikhānasa ritual is easily bridged over by the well-known archaic division of the fourfold (universe), which is represented as fivefold, because the whole is added to its components'.¹⁸ See for instance *AtriS* 36, 7, distinguishing between four manifestations of the Highest for the sake of the prosperity of the classes of society and the Primeval Manifestation. At 37, 4 ff. the four manifestations are said to emanate from Viṣṇu (from whom they really are inseparable) just like the four Vedas. Being correlated with the four eras of the world and the four classes of society they should be 'placed' on the four sides of the ground-plan of a temple, the centre being reserved for the inner hall of Viṣṇu himself.

The above ritual theory was corroborated by the ancient belief in the

¹⁷ (Raghunathachakravarti Bhattacharya and) Ramakrishna Kavi, introduction to the edition of *Atri's Samūrtārcanādhikaraṇa*, Tirupati, 1943, pp. vii f. See also *AtriS* 30, 36 ff., where a series of formulae is quoted which are to accompany the oblations into the five fires and in which the puruṣa Acyuta is associated with the *Gārhapatya* fire, the puruṣa Satya (*Satyamūrti*) with the *Anvāhārya*, the Puruṣa with the *Āhavanīya*, Aniruddha with the *Avasathya*, Viṣṇu (*puruṣaṃ viṣṇudevam*) with the Sabhya fire.

¹⁸ See e.g. J. Gonda, *Viṣṇuism and Śivaism*, London, 1970, 45.

identity of Viṣṇu and the sacrifice.¹⁹ Viṣṇu indeed is all sacrifices, consists of, and in, them: *AtriS* 1, 10, *sarvayajñamayo viṣṇuḥ*. In expatiating upon the necessity of worship and the various methods of adoring God and gaining access to His presence—sacrifices, fasting, ceremonies, liberality, asceticism—*AtriS* (1, 25) quotes a statement from the Śruti: *dharmatvam eva yajñasya viṣṇuḥ* 'Viṣṇu is the inherent nature of sacrificial worship', observing that the sacrifice is only complete by 'remembering' Him, but defective if this 'remembrance' is neglected. When this God is worshipped all gods are included in His worship (1, 27): cf. *BhG* 7, 21; 9, 23 f. Remembering Viṣṇu and executing his cult leads to final liberation (1, 26). Hence also passages such as *AtriS* 24, 8 ff. advising the making of a golden cult image of God, the value of which is infinitely more than that of a silver one because gold is imperishable—it represents immortality²⁰—and Viṣṇu and gold are identical.

It is, however, image worship which is in full detail described in the ritual handbooks of the community. The devout worshipper will enjoy every success in earthly life and reach heaven and communion with Viṣṇu, the source of all life, after death. Although therefore stress is one-sidedly laid on the practical side of religion, far from rare are passages in which, by way of justification, motivation, expatiation, or otherwise, references are made to the doctrinal background of the ritual prescriptions. In other cases it is the mantras which are helpful not only in determining the sense of the ritual acts they accompany and their position and significance in a definite ritual, but also in detecting the doctrinal foundation which they imply. In the present contribution it will be my endeavour to investigate these relations between the religious practices of the Vaikhānasas and their underlying ideas, making attempts to discover the methods adopted by their authorities in justifying their Viṣṇuite cult and in basing their practices on those traditions which in their opinion were of unquestionable orthodoxy and infallibility. For reasons of space I shall have to limit myself mainly to the *Smārtasūtra*, taking advantage of starting at the beginning. I shall moreover have to give up any attempt at aiming at a survey of all relative facts; the material discussed may be regarded as illustrative rather than complete, the inquiry instituted as tentative rather than final and exhaustive.

II

To avoid any misunderstanding, a few words must be said here on a point which is not without interest and would be worth examining in detail, viz. the occurrence of non-Viṣṇuite mantras which are not found in Vedic texts. Thus in *VaikhSmS* 4, 4 (Aṣṭakā), Agni, Indra, and Varuṇa are invoked in a long and very corrupt formula which occurs also in *KāśyS* 69; there is a mantra stating that the earth is the best means of purification (2, 1, where it suits its purpose better than *KāśyS* 70). Other formulae do occur in other texts, but only once or twice, e.g. in the collection of formulae of the Āpastambins, e.g. 2, 14: 'The scent that dwells with the Apsarases', accompanying the use of sandal powder (but in *KāśyS* 45 used while depositing a pearl for these goddesses). Yajurvedic formulae (*TS* 1, 2, 13, 2; *VS* 5, 17) originally prescribed in the śrauta ritual in connexion with the sacrificial carts (*ŚB* 3, 5, 3, 17) found their way into the Vaikhānasa grhya rites (*VaikhSmS* 1, 21). The occurrence of these and similar formulae shows that this sūtra has, not unlike other Vedic

¹⁹ See J. Gonda, *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, Utrecht, 1954 (reprinted Delhi, 1969), 77 ff.

²⁰ See e.g. *ŚB* 5, 2, 1, 20; 5, 3, 5, 15; 5, 4, 1, 14, etc.

texts of this category and to a certain extent in touch with some of them, been through a process of development and that the influences to which it was subjected and the elements it adopted were not exclusively Viṣṇuite.

The same conclusion may be drawn from the incorporation of rituals which are devoid of any specifically Viṣṇuite feature. A case in point is the *tarpaṇa*, i.e. the daily presentation of libations of water to gods, sages, and Fathers, which constitutes a subsidiary constituent part of the bathing rites (*VaikhSmS* 1, 4). Mention of this is made e.g. in Baudhāyana's description of the *Pitrmedha* (2, 3 f.).²¹ According to *smṛti* texts one has, while plunging one's whole body in water, to perform this rite: see *Manu* 2, 176, who combines it with worship of the gods and placing fuel on the sacred fire; *ViṣṇuS* 64, 24 ff.; *ParāśaraS* 12, 12 f. About particulars there was much difference of opinion.²² The Vaikhānasa compiler—in this in agreement with other sūtrakāras such as Āśvalāyana (*GS* 3, 4, 1 ff.) and Śāṅkhāyana (*GS* 4, 9, 3; 10, 3 ff.)—gives a much more detailed account and also fuller particulars about the many formulae to be used. The person performing the rite should make obeisance to the water with a long mantra which, as far as I am able to see, does not occur elsewhere. It is untranslatable but this much is clear that those who live in Kurukṣetra address the water as belonging to their region, auspicious, and fragrant. This is interesting because Kurukṣetra is a region of the North, whereas the Vaikhānasas lived in the South. A considerable number of libations are offered to the great gods, the eight deities presiding over the quarters of the universe, the planets, Vedas, metres, seers, Fathers, etc., who are, all of them, addressed by name. It may be assumed that at least the compiler of this section was convinced of the correctness of these lists of divine powers, that is to say that it was his belief that their favour was of special importance. Lastly, the one who performs the rite pours out some water with the formula 'Let all those who want water accept it', which is not found in any Vedic texts, sips some water, and starts the *brahmayajña* (the daily recitation of a part of the Veda), with which the *tarpaṇa* combines also in view of other authorities.²³ As worshippers had to perform the *tarpaṇa* in accordance with the traditions of their particular Vedic schools²⁴—the powers to be satisfied being to a certain extent different in each sūtra—the conclusion must be that the Vaikhānasas had in the course of time elaborated a long procedure of their own, which, while concerning many members of the pantheon, cannot be characterized as typically Viṣṇuite, unless the place of honour conceded to Nārāyaṇa among the gods may be regarded as such. It is in this connexion worth recalling that the Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas, whose authorities do not insist on the names of the gods, etc., being mentioned individually—they limit themselves to a comprehensive formula²⁵—perform the rite in the consciousness of their being integral parts (*aṁśa*) of Viṣṇu's nature. The Śaivas, while retaining Vedic elements, introduced, in the course of time, additional ritual acts and formulae which are Tāntric in character, to begin with Śiva and his 'members'.

In contradistinction to the other Vedic schools, according to which the burning in effigy of a dead body is performed only in case the body has not been found, the Vaikhānasiyas—prompted by scrupulousness?—consider this

²¹ See *Śrautakośa*, 1, 2, Poona, 1962, p. 1048.

²² For these particulars see P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, II, Poona, 1941, 668 f.; 700 ff.

²³ Kane, op. cit., II, p. 668, n. 1590.

²⁴ Kane, op. cit., II, 668.

²⁵ See Gonda, *Viṣṇuism and Śivaism*, p. 178, n. 105.

act meritorious also in normal circumstances and have it performed a month or a year after a person's death. The relevant directions are introduced by the observation that 'otherwise [than by this burning in effigy] of him who has paid his debts [to gods and Fathers], these two categories of beings do not enjoy the merits of the sacrifices and the gifts (*iṣṭāpūrtam*) of the deceased person'. That is why, the author adds, this (at first sight superfluous) rite is ordained for the welfare ('as an auspicious event': *maṅgalyāya*) of his family (*VaikhSmS* 5, 12).

A brief remark may also be made on the section dealing with the *agnyāyatana*, the place for the sacred fire and the requisites for the fire ritual (*VaikhSmS* 1, 8). Whereas the relative information of other *Gr̥hyasūtras* is either comparatively concise (*Āśv.* 1, 9; *Āp.* 5, 13 ff.) or mainly limited to particulars concerning the service or the places from where to fetch the fire, Hiranyakeśin—between whose school and the Vaikhānasas relations must have been somewhat closer²⁶—inserts some information about the place of the fire: it must be in an enclosed space, be sprinkled, strewn with sand, etc. (1, 7, 26, 6). With these prescriptions the beginning of the Vaikhānasa text (1, 8) shows some resemblance (clean spot, sand), but in the description of the so-called *agnīśālā* 'the abode of the fire' at the end of the *khaṇḍa*, the text is in substantial agreement with the prescriptions for the *kuṇḍa* of the Hindu cult, and the technicalities about strainer, vessels, etc. intervening between these two sections did not attract the attention of other sūtrakāras. Curiously enough, no mention is made of Viṣṇu, although *ŚGS* 1, 1, 11 knew of a rite in connexion with the domestic fire requiring a stanza sacred to this god.

Among the rare theoretical digressions in the *VaikhSmS* some are not known from other sources.²⁷ An interesting passage is the last part of 1, 14, which after the instructions relating to the fuel sticks to be thrown into the fire expatiates upon the way followed by the oblations before they reach their destination. The expatiation obviously is to explain what happens with the sacrificial material and to give an insight into the relation between the acts described in the first part of the *khaṇḍa*—the sprinkling and worshipping of the fuel sticks, a purification with water, and the throwing of the fuel sticks into the fire—and the gratification of the god for whom the sacrifice is intended. Revealing the theory underlying an important ritual act, it therefore informs us about the belief in the mechanism and efficacy of this act. It states that one should meditate on the deity for whom the sacrificial substance is poured out to be offered. Four rays of this one (i.e. Agni), viz. the benevolent one (*suṣumṇa*), the luminous one, the animated one, and the impregnating one, take the oblation and deposit it in the 'dappled one' (*prśnau*), which—in view of what is to follow—here may denote the sun (cf. *SB* 9, 2, 3, 14), although 'the benevolent or kind one' (*suṣumṇa*) is elsewhere a name of one of the rays of that luminary. This (*prśni*), by his rays called the one that conveys pure nectar, the accumulating one (?), the heavenly one, and the one that purifies the worlds, causes the moon to increase. Yonder king Soma (the moon) in its turn gratifies that deity for which the oblation is intended with nectar by means of his four rays, called the one that goes to the root, the one that goes to the *vapā* (omentum ?, marrow ?), the nectar-ejecting one, and the god-beloved one. Some elements of this theory are not new: Agni's paths are believed to lead

²⁶ See Caland, *Over het Vaikhānasasūtra*, 5.

²⁷ I refer to Caland, *Over het Vaikhānasasūtra*, 10 f., and *Sacred books*, introduction, p. xx, where more instances are mentioned.

to the gods (cf. *VS* 15, 53); for instance, the sun is said (*ŚB* 14, 1, 4, 8) to be the divine sustainer of the gods, and elsewhere stated to know, or rule over the paths of the sacrifice (*VS* 5, 33; *PB* 1, 4, 1) and the essence of the oblations goes up to the moon (*ŚB* 9, 1, 2, 39), which is elsewhere said to be the door of the heavenly world (*KauṣU* 1, 2); one might also remember the belief that Agni's rays are like those of the sun (*ŚB* 8, 6, 1, 16); the journey to the moon of the soul after death in *ChU* 5, 10, 3 and the purāṇic idea that one of the seven principal rays of the sun feeds the moon, the *amṛta* of which is drunk by the gods. It may, however, be recalled that according to the usual view Agni is the one who conveys the sacrifices to the gods,²⁸ the texts being silent about intermediaries such as the sun and the moon.

As compared with the descriptions of the regular sacrifices found in the other *Gr̥hyasūtras*, which, generally speaking, are of different length and content, the *Vaiṣṇānasasūtra* devotes no less than six *khaṇḍas* (1, 16–21) to the normal paradigm of a regular sacrificial act. Although, in this elaborate treatise, a considerable number of sacrifices are mentioned and many gods (Dhātār, Varuṇa, Prajāpati, Indra, etc., etc.) are referred to, Viṣṇu himself does not appear before the last chapter.²⁹

The Vaikhānasa marriage ceremonies include hardly anything that might be regarded as typically Viṣṇuite. The formula 'Viṣṇu must go after you' subjoined to the seven formulae (*VaiṣṇSmS* 3, 4) which are to accompany the rite of the seven steps is traditional, and in the same or a varied form is also found in other *Gr̥hyasūtras*. Mention, it is true, may be made of the formulae *śrīr iva subhagā bhava* and *puruṣottama iva durjaya bhava* which are among the twice four eulogia to be pronounced during the seizing of the hand, but as they occur beside the names of Arundhatī, etc. and Manu, etc., they do not point to exclusive Viṣṇuite allegiance. Similar remarks may be made in connexion with other rites: the *nāṇḍīmukhaśrāddha* (2, 1 f.), the *upanayana* (2, 3 ff.) and *samāvartana* (2, 13 ff.), the *pīṇḍapitṛyajña* (4, 5 f.), the funeral rites (5, 8 ff.), which remained unaffected by Viṣṇuite influences.

There is nothing typically Viṣṇuite in many descriptions of various technicalities, particular procedures connected with the construction of images or sanctuaries, the customs observed in handling building materials, etc., whatever their value may be as a source of information on popular belief. Stones, the best material for construction, are—to mention a single instance—considered to be animated, and the so-called embryos, which may be recognized in them during cutting and breaking, are a likely cause of evil: if one sees a snake, one will die. That is why various precautions have to be taken in connexion with them (*KāśyS* 28; *AtriS* 12 f.; *Marīci*, *Vimānārcanakaḥ* 15). Kāśyapa probably did not see his way to giving this piece of popular belief a tinge of Viṣṇuism, but Atri inserts it as a sort of introduction to a long description of the use of stones for ritual purposes.

Nor did the great divergence in the descriptions of some other rites contained in this work, for instance in the ceremonies to be performed on the occasion of confinement and birth (*VaiṣṇSmS* 3, 14 f., *soṣyantīkarma* and *jātakarma*),³⁰ involve the introduction of a typically Viṣṇuite element.

²⁸ I refer to my paper on 'Adhvarā and adhvaryū', *Vishv. Ind. Journal*, III, 2, 1965, 163 ff., esp. 173.

²⁹ I shall have to deal with this point in another publication.

³⁰ These rites did not of course discourage those compilers who focused their attention on temple ritual.

Another example : whereas the *Vaikhānasas* join, with respect to some details of the ceremony by which the annual course of study is opened (*VaikhSmsS* 2, 12), other texts of the Black Yajurveda,³¹ their lengthy description does not as a whole recur elsewhere. This is not surprising because in the other *Gr̥hyasūtras* there is also much divergence with respect to the mantras and other particulars, and in the course of time many additions were made to the simple *upākarma* rite of the older texts. Among the deities to be invoked are not only the four Vedas, the ṛsis, Śraddhā, Medhā, Memory, etc., but also Study and Suspense of Study, the months and half-months, and other powers which were no doubt believed to exert, during the period of study, an influence for good or ill such as the lawgivers Śaṅkha and Likhita and Vainateya, i.e. Viṣṇu's bird Garuḍa. Strikingly enough Viṣṇu himself is here absent again.

The sacrifice on the day of full moon in the month Āsvayuja (*VaikhSmsS* 4, 9)³² is even a decidedly Śivaite rite requiring the invocation of Bhava and other manifestations of Rudra, attesting to the syncretistic character of the *Vaikhānasa* cult and its aptness to incorporate vital elements of popular belief.

III

In studying the great religions of Hinduism we should not forget that the masses, always primarily interested in the regulation of matters of immediate personal importance, were often unable to follow the educated in their philosophical and theological views of the great gods. Although Viṣṇu was in the eyes of those who composed the *Vaikhānasasūtra* the High God, he was in popular belief less prominent and often considered one of a group of gods of a more or less parochial character. In cosmological and astronomical systems he was, to mention only this, put on a par with other gods (Agni, Varuṇa, Rudra, and five other 'presidents' of the nine planets) whose special business was to regulate matters of immediate popular interest.³³ This popular belief did not fail to gain access to the *sūtra*. Thus the section on appeasing the planets (*grahaśānti*, 4, 13 f.) begins by observing that worldly existence or affairs (career in life) are dependent on the planets and that a man should therefore duly worship these powers when any adversity befalls him. At the end of the section a prospect of the greatest evil (disease, etc.) is held out to him who does not undertake this rite. 'One should undertake no religious act before one has performed the appeasement of the planets'. The rite itself, which is elaborately described, consists of worship of and sacrifices to the planets and, separately, to the gods presiding over them, among them Viṣṇu, who is in the well-known systematic way co-ordinated with the planet Mercury (similarly *MatsyaP* 93, 3), the dark blue colour, and the north-east, whereas his colleagues occupy other positions in this system of correlations.³⁴ Although the description runs, in general, parallel with that contained in the *Baudhāyana Gr̥hyaparīśeṣasūtra* 1, 16 and Yājñavalkya's Dharma work (1, 295-308), its author does not belie his Viṣṇuite allegiance : he has the ceremony brought to a conclusion with oblations and formulae addressed to his God. The use of the mantra 'Here did Viṣṇu stride' (*RV* 1, 22, 17) to accompany an oblation to Mercury cannot of course be adduced as an argument, because *Baudhāyana* prescribes the use of *RV* 1, 154, 1.

³¹ For particulars see Kane, op. cit., II, 807 f.

³² Kane, op. cit., II, 827.

³³ Gonda, *Viṣṇuism and Śivaism*, 62 f.

³⁴ cf. also Kane, op. cit., II, 884 f.

IV

Some random observations may, to begin with, be made to illustrate the gradual process of Viṣṇuization, that is to say, of the introduction of Viṣṇuite elements—and especially of elements that are typical of the Vaikhānasa denomination—into the subject-matter of a traditional *smārtasūtra*, as well as the penetration of doctrines regarding this god into Vedic, or at least traditional, rituals.

In what seems to be the earliest description of the *brahmayajña*, i.e. the daily recitation of a part of the Veda,³⁵ viz. *SB* 11, 5, 6, 3 ff., no mention is made of Viṣṇu. According to *TĀ* 2, 13, one should conclude this ceremony by repeating thrice the formula 'Adoration to Brahman (Veda or Prajāpati), to Agni, to the Earth, to the Herbs, to Speech, to Vācaspati; I offer adoration to the firm Viṣṇu' (*namo viṣṇave bṛhate karomi*). The same words recur, in the same context, in *ĀśvGS* 3, 3, 4 where *mahate* ('... the great Viṣṇu') is read instead of *bṛhate*. Other authorities prescribe definite hymns and stanzas of the *Rgveda* for reciting, but the śākhās differ as to particulars. Among the obligatory portions mentioned in *VaikhSmS* 1, 4 is *VaikhS* 1, 18, containing various stanzas of *TS* and *TB*, and *inter alia* the *Viṣṇusūkta* (*RV* 1, 154).³⁶

The later ritual handbooks of the community, being more thoroughly Viṣṇuized than the *sūtra*, tend to include in the treatment of those subjects which they have in common with the latter, not only references to this authoritative text or its 'venerated seer', and incidentally to one of the other promulgators of their lore (cf., e.g., *KāśyS* 63),³⁷ but also some typically Viṣṇuite features. Thus we find, in avowed agreement with Atri's work (30, 46 ff.), at the end of Kāśyapa's chapter (63)³⁸ on the *āghāra*—the preliminary to sacrifices which in the Vedic ritual precedes the introductory offerings (*prayāja*) and here to be offered into all the fires—an 'invocation into the lotus-fire'—not mentioned in the older text which gives only an elaborate description of the *āghāra* into one fire—running as follows: 'The lotus-fire, the deity of the sacrifice into the lotus-fire, *om tapaḥ*, the puruṣa Vāsudeva, Satya, Puruṣa, Nārāyaṇa ³⁹[I worship]'.

Meditating on God as being present in the fires the worshipper should offer an oblation to Him. This lotus-fire which is described by Kāśyapa (ch. 5–8) and is also mentioned by Atri (e.g. 13, 21; 29, 61 ff.; 30, 46) obviously is a non-Vedic addition to the five fires which are regularly maintained in this community.⁴⁰ It was according to these authorities produced by Brahmā out of his own heart when he wished to create the universe by means of meditation on Nārāyaṇa. It was in that fire that he produced the Vedas, the seers, the Fathers, the living beings, the other sacred fires. After having, in accordance with *RV* 10, 90, created the four *varṇas*, he ordained for them these fires according to their stages of life. Thereupon he was engaged in worshipping Viṣṇu with formulae from the four Vedas, with Vedic methods, and in sacrificing into the lotus-fire, and giving, at their request, this fire to the seers of yore in order to enable them to worship the Everlasting One. Being equal to the Highest Self it appeases all evil, influences and fulfils all desires; being identical with all the Vedas it serves the worship of Viṣṇu and, unobtainable

³⁵ Kane, op. cit., II, 700 f.

³⁶ The ritual use of which I intend to discuss elsewhere.

³⁷ cf. e.g. *AtriS* 45, 71 quoting Bhṛgu, Kāśyapa, and Marici.

³⁸ I refer also to my remark made on p. 553, II. 10 ff.

³⁹ God's 'forms'.

⁴⁰ See also Goudriaan, op. cit., 30.

by the gods, grants final emancipation. The mere thought of it frees from all sins. Anyone who performs a circumambulation around it obtains the results of the *Aśvamedha* (note this attempt at equalizing their own rite with one of the most important Vedic sacrifices) and becomes magnified in Viṣṇu's world, an ideal which is also within the reach of those who meditate on it. This combination of Vedic and non-Vedic elements is the doctrinal and mythological basis of this particular form of worship and motivates the necessity of laying out this fire. Various directions are given for the sacrifices into this fire by those who long for offspring, a long life, etc. The relative rites are, generally speaking, thoroughly Viṣṇuite, although, if one wishes to obtain offspring, other gods are also worshipped, for instance Prajāpati. Those who are desirous of prosperity sacrifice to Śrī (*KāśyS* 7), whose worship is enjoined because one has upon scriptural authority to seek prosperity even without acquiescing in the result of one's deeds in former lives.

The ritual handbooks provide us with many data illustrating the process of gradual 'hinduization' of rites and socio-ritual customs which the older sources represent as Vedic in character, that is to say, as embedded in the Vedic ritual customs. Whereas, for instance, the Vedic *āgrayanēṣṭi* is a first-fruit sacrifice to be performed as a śrauta rite,⁴¹ and the offerings of rice, etc., are made to Soma, Indra-Agni, the Viśve Devāḥ, Heaven and Earth,⁴² the Vaikhānasas (see *AtriS* 47, 19 ff.) add a number of condiments such as molasses, and also garments, flowers, etc., to the usual grain, and offer these oblations exclusively to Viṣṇu, who is in the usual Hinduist way bathed, decorated with garments, etc. The purpose of the Vedic rite is according to the *ŚB* 5, 2, 3, 9 the 'health and perfection of the plants; it is a rite of renewal (cf. *ĀpŚS* 6, 31, 12) to guarantee the continuity of nature's fertility,⁴³ but the Vaikhānasas expect not only the cereals to thrive but also those devotees who offer gold to gain dominion and access to Viṣṇu's abode. Hence also the use of *RV* 1, 154, 5 'I would attain to that dear protectorate of his, where men who turn to the gods [devotedly and by ritual means] rejoice . . .'.⁴⁴

It is no matter of surprise that the later texts are sometimes more explicit in particulars concerning the ritual importance of a doctrine or a socio-religious principle. The care for ritual purity and all its socio-religious implications is apparent from the sections on pure and mixed castes contained in the *Sūtra* (10, 11 ff.) and reproduced by *Kāśyapa*, ch. 91. Whereas, however, the former authority limits himself to a detailed enumeration of facts (including particulars about the castes' obligations and occupations) and the warning to beget only pure sons, the latter ends his survey by stating that 'one may converse with members of impure castes only if some dry grass is between' and prescribing for the king 'to pay attention to these castes, and to charge them with their proper tasks'. These pieces of practical advice make the interest in this subject intelligible.

Popular belief, a passion for systematization, and Viṣṇuite belief coalesced in passages such as *KāśyS* 34: Viṣṇu should never be worshipped without his attendants, and therefore the images of his manifestations should always be accompanied by these attendants; if not, some evil will occur: if the goddesses are missing, one will lose one's wife and children; if the Conch is missing, insanity will follow.

⁴¹ Cf. also Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, I, 129.

⁴² See e.g. A. B. Keith, *The religion and philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, Cambridge Mass., 1925, 323 f.

⁴³ Gonda, *op. cit.*, 163.

The amalgamation of traditional Vedic ritualism with yogic and ascetic tendencies is for instance reflected by formulae such as 'For Him whose manifestation is the sacrifice (i.e. Viṣṇu),⁴⁴ whose concrete form is yoga . . .' (*KāśyS* 46).

That the Vaikhānasas had, on the other hand, customs and ritual acts which, while being thoroughly Viṣṇuite in character, were different from the corresponding usages of other Viṣṇuites may appear from the so-called *garbhacakra* : whereas the others have, at the end of the Viṣṇubali (cf. *VaiKhSms* 3, 13) ceremony,⁴⁵ the arms of a pregnant woman marked by God's disc by means of a heated iron (*taptacakra*) (*AnandaS* 8, 13), the Vaikhānasas give her the remains of a mess of rice to eat on which the disc has been imprinted (ibid., 10). This custom cannot be disconnected from the belief in the special power inherent in the remains of food which has been offered to a god or, in some way or other, been associated with him⁴⁶ and which is to establish a communion between God and worshipper, to bring about a transference of power from the former to the latter.

V

The compiler of the *VaiKhSms* makes on a comparatively large scale use of a device which, it is true, was sometimes sporadically but in other cases more regularly also applied by sūtrakāras of the previous period.⁴⁷ The mere enumeration of ritual prescriptions is in sūtra texts at irregular intervals interrupted by a reference to, or even a quotation from, a Brāhmaṇa or another authority in order to supply the reader with a motivation or justification of the relevant injunction,⁴⁸ to demonstrate its purpose, applicability, or effectiveness, or simply to show that a custom or a prescription is enjoined by a revealed text.⁴⁹ In reading the relevant Vaikhānasa passages I cannot help supposing the compiler to have been urged by the desire to emphasize the 'orthodoxy' of his expositions, that is by the wish to show that the Vaikhānasa ritual is in harmony with the authentic Vedic tradition, that his prescriptions are not only related to, but also founded on the doctrines expounded in the revealed texts or that they do not deviate from generally received tenets and opinions.

Viṣṇu's unique position is emphasized by recalling the fact that his regular worship is equal to the worship of all the gods (*VaiKhSms* 4, 10 *viṣṇor nityārcā sarvadevārcanā bhavati*). This claim to superiority is supported by a reference to the *Brāhmaṇa* passage stating that between Agni and Viṣṇu are all the other deities. This passage forms part of a description of the regular worship of Viṣṇu,⁵⁰ which in the domestic ritual is to take place at the close of any obligatory sacrifice in the fire. At 4, 10 the *VaiKhSms* inserts, by way of motivation, a quotation from the *AiB* (1, 1, 1) 'Agni is the lowest, and Viṣṇu is the

⁴⁴ See Gonda, *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, 77.

⁴⁵ This will be discussed elsewhere.

⁴⁶ See my remarks in 'Atharvaveda 11, 7', in *Mélanges d'indianisme à la mémoire de L. Renou*, Paris, 1968, 301 ff.

⁴⁷ As to authors belonging to a later period see the brief remarks made by L. Renou, 'Sur la forme des Brahmasūtra', in E. Bender (ed.), *Indological studies in honor of W. Norman Brown*, New Haven, Conn., 1962, 195.

⁴⁸ I do not speak here of the well-known observations on variant ritual practices adopted by other schools or teachers (such as e.g. *ĀpŚS* 1, 8, 12; a non-identifiable reference to the tradition of the Vājasaneyins: 1, 14, 13; 1, 15, 10).

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. *ĀpŚS* 1, 1, 9 (a quotation from *TB* 3, 2, 1, 2); 1, 4, 7 (from the Vājasaneyaka); 2, 12, 3 (*TS* 2, 5, 10); 2, 14, 2 (*TS* 2, 5, 11, 7); *ĀpGS* 1, 2, 10 f. (*TB* 2, 1, 4, 5); *HGS* 1, 3, 10, 3 (where anonymous authorities are cited); and comparatively often in *ĀpDhS*, e.g. 1, 1, 1, 10 f. (a reference to a Brāhmaṇa); 1, 1, 3, 9 (cf. *GB* 1, 2, 4); 1, 1, 3, 26; 1, 2, 7, 11; 1, 4, 12, 1 ff. (cf. *TĀ* 11, 14, 3, etc.); 1, 5, 17, 28; 31; 1, 6, 18, 26. Cf. also *SGS* 4, 5, 6, etc.

⁵⁰ For which see Kane, op. cit., II, 726 ff.

highest (*paramah*) of the gods; between these two are all the other deities'. These words (cf. also *KB* 7, 1) stating 'the two terminal forms of the sacrifice' (*yajñasyāntye tanvau*) introduce a section dealing with the consecration sacrifice which according to different authorities precedes or follows the consecration (*dīkṣā*) proper. In the *Brāhmaṇa* they are to provide a basis for the ritual practice of offering a cake to Agni and Viṣṇu; this cake is meant to be an offering to all the deities.⁵¹ In contradistinction to the older Taittirīyas who hold that even Agni alone 'is all the gods' (*TS* 6, 2, 2, 6; *TB* 3, 2, 8, 10), the *Vaikhānasas*, eliminating Agni, draw the conclusion from the above quotation that the highest God Viṣṇu, established in his dwelling, should every morning and evening be worshipped at the end of a sacrifice (4, 10 *tasmād grhe paramaṃ viṣṇum pratisthāpya sāyamprātār homānte rcayanti*).

We can, however, hardly limit ourselves to a reference to this explicit statement which was, so to say, to legalize the regular worship of Viṣṇu as performed by the *Vaikhānasas*. At the end of the relevant section (4, 12) the author holds out to those who worship Viṣṇu the prospect of reaching his 'highest place' (*paramaṃ padam*). It was not a difficult problem for the Viṣṇuite to produce Vedic evidence in support of this purpose of the rite. The man who in the Vedic ritual consecrates himself, that is undergoes a sanctification and temporarily reaches a higher stage of existence is expressly stated to become Viṣṇu (*ŚB* 3, 2, 1, 17), that is, to become identical with the god who, together with Agni, is also lord and guardian of the *dīkṣā* (*AiB* 1, 4, 10).⁵² The study of the Veda is explicitly enjoined because it leads to moral and religious merit in this world and in that beyond (*VaikhSmS* 9, 12). The hermit who devotes himself to meditation practises bodily mortification (10, 5) 'according to the Veda and the Vedānta'—the latter term must refer to the Upaniṣads. Of special interest is, at the end of 10, 7, the statement following on the rule that a *Vaikhānasa* ascetic should, when practising meditation, consider (Viṣṇu-)Nārāyaṇa the highest Brahman in order to realize his identity with that principle: 'for it is declared in sacred texts: "Nārāyaṇa is the highest Brahman"'. This quotation (*nārāyaṇaḥ param brahmeti śrutiḥ*) is indeed found in *TĀ* 10, 11, 1.

The statement (*VaikhSmS* 8, 1) that there are four social classes introducing a survey of their customary observances is—as in *VāsDhS.* 4, 2—corroborated by a quotation from the śruti, viz. *RV* 10, 90, 12 (= *TĀ* 3, 12, 5).⁵³

Another reference to the authority of the Veda is found at the end of the *samāvartana* (2, 17) where it is observed that in performing the relevant rite water and flour cakes may be substituted for honey and food called *dhāman*.⁵⁴ 'For it is prescribed in the Veda that water is equal to all deities, accomplishing every object, that the earth and trees may serve as *vedī* and utensils, and plants as the sacrificial animal'.⁵⁵

At the end of the section dealing with the Sāvitra observance to be undertaken by a brahmācārin, the author of *VaikhSmS* 2, 7 quotes anonymous theologians (*brahmavādīnaḥ*): 'This sacrifice has been given [to him] by Brahmā as his agnihotra; on it are based his fires'. This sentence, which is introduced by *yataḥ* 'since, because', furnishes the reader with a motivation

⁵¹ cf. *TS* 5, 5, 1, 4; *ŚB* 3, 1, 3, 1; 5, 2, 3, 6 and see W. Caland and V. Henry, *L'Agniṣṭoma*, Paris, 1906, 15 f.

⁵² See Gonda, *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, 113.

⁵³ Other instances worth mentioning occur in *VaikhSmS* 8, 7; 9, 5.

⁵⁴ See Caland, *Sacred books*, p. 64, n. 3 (Caland hesitantly translates 'viands'); J. Gonda, *The meaning of the Sanskrit term dhāman*, Amsterdam Acad., 1967, 58 f.

⁵⁵ Caland refers to *TS* 6, 2, 4, 5, and *TB* 3, 2, 4, 3 (op. cit., p. 64, n. 4).

of the preceding injunction: 'In this way the brahmacārīn should sacrifice constantly [every] evening and morning', explicitly emphasizing the identity of the rite under discussion and the traditional Vedic *agnihotra*.⁵⁶

An opinion of the 'theologians' (*brahmavādīnaḥ*)⁵⁷ which, in other words, occurs in *BhG* 8, 6—'On whatever state of existence one fixes one's thoughts at the moment of death, identical with that one becomes'—is quoted in motivation of an attitude recommended to the moribund worshipper who occupies the mind of the author of *VaiṣṇoS* 5, 1. There it reads: 'Having restrained one's organs of sense within (?), one expects: 'from') the object of sense one should . . . fix one's mind on Brahman (*sic*, not on Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa) which is seated in the three highest places (abodes), which is manifold, self-luminous, which has no second, or by way of adoring the Ātman and thinking: *tad yo 'sau so 'ham*, i.e. "Now I am the same as that one" (viz. the universal Ātman)'. It may be parenthetically added that after this passage the author interestingly expatiates on the processes of dying and decomposition. Having no opportunity to mention any ritual act or mantra and summarizing what happens in the dying body, he ends this passage with the statement that the socio-religious merit (*dharma*) and demerit of the person concerned, his 'being upwards and downwards' (*ūrdhvaś ca, i.e., according to the commentary, 'heaven' and 'hell'*), knowledge and ignorance, joy and grief, will, according to the will of the Lord, depart with him. This comparatively long 'theoretical' interruption of the ritual prescriptions which does not fail to emphasize, in its last line, its theistic foundation, is no doubt intended as a doctrinal justification of part of the elaborate ritual injunctions relating to the above subjects.

By way of introduction to the daily *prāṇāgnihotra* described in *VaiṣṇoS* 2, 18, it is observed that in this rite—which constitutes an introduction to the morning and evening meal—the self-luminous ātman is the sacrificer; the intellect (*buddhi*) is the housewife; the heart-lotus is the *veḍī*; the hair on the body the *darbhā* blades; the outbreathing (*prāṇa*) the *gārhapatyā*-fire; the inbreathing (*apāna*) the *āhavanīyā*-fire; the *vyāna* the *dakṣiṇāgni*; the *udāna* the *sabhyā*-fire; the *samāna* the *āvasathya*-fire. The (five) organs of sense, viz. the tongue, etc., are sacrificial vessels; the (five) objects of sense, viz. taste, etc. the sacrificial substances. The result (of this rite) is the insight into the meaning of the syllable *om* (viz. the Brahman). After the description of the relevant acts the information is given that according to the 'theologians' (*brahmavādīnaḥ*) this *agnihotra*, which is to be performed as long as the sacrificer lives, is the sacrifice of those who worship the Self. Instead of the stereotyped phrase *iti vijñāyate* occurring at the end of a short addendum there is in part of the manuscripts a reference to another tradition, viz. 'Thus speaks Vikhanas', the mythical originator of the denomination. The rite itself is comparatively simple, but must have been of special importance in circles which attached greater importance to spiritual observances than traditional rites such as the daily Vedic *agnihotra*. According to the *Prayoga* it is indeed intended for the so-called *naiṣṭhikasnātakas*, i.e. a class of perpetual religious students (8, 3). Another 'sacrifice into breath' is, on the one hand in a more elaborate and on the other in a widely divergent way, described in the *Prāṇāgnihotropaniṣad*.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ As is often the case in Hindu treatises of this character references to the authoritative texts are also formulated as follows: According to the Scriptures, as we know, Nārāyaṇa 'has pervaded this whole existence and stays in it' (*KāśyS* 68; the text is *MahāNU* 11, 6 = 245).

⁵⁷ The identity of these authorities may occasionally be established: thus the expression 'face of Agni' (*agnimukham*), occurring in *VaiṣṇoS* 1, 15 was already used in *BGS* 1, 3, 32.

⁵⁸ Translated by P. Deussen, *Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda*, Leipzig, 1921 (reprinted Darmstadt, 1963), 611 ff.

In vindication of the validity of the rite the author expresses the opinion that the one who performs it may be convinced of the possibility to be released from the *saṃsāra* without performing the normal *agnihotra* (1, 1). The compiler of the *VaikhSmS* goes further: it does not replace the Vedic *agnihotra*, but is another form of the same. The prescriptions relating to the disposal of the dead bodies of religious mendicants, etc. are *VaikhSmS* 5, 8 introduced by a reference to the opinions of the 'theologians' (*brahmacārinah*): 'The ascetic (*yati*) who is above dharma and non-dharma, has caused the gods to mount (sit down) to the right, the Fathers to the non-right, sees [all] in the Ātman; to this one, who worships [by means of sacrifices only] the Ātman, [belongs] the Veda-fire'. The yogin, he who has reached intimate union with God (*devasāyujyakāḥ*), and he who enters another body are likewise without fires. According to the following relevant injunction, the bodies of these persons should be conveyed to a river to be buried there in a hole dug at a sandy spot. In connexion with this act the author now proceeds to quote four stanzas: 'Those twice-born men who convey the [dead] body of a *saṃnyāsīn* will, at every step from the beginning onwards, obtain the fruit of a sacrifice, . . .', adding that thus it is recognized or understood (*iti vijñāyate*), viz. by the expert authorities. What strikes us here is the unusual length and circumstantiality of the quotation, which becomes no doubt intelligible in the light of the great importance attached, in this text, to ascetic life.

A similar anonymous reference to the sacred tradition (*iti vijñāyate*) occurs at the end of *VaikhSmS* 4, 14 after a long section on the rites performed in order to 'appease' the planets: 'One should undertake no religious act before one has appeased the planets'. The descriptions of the *grahaśānti* in *Yājñ.* 1, 295 ff. and *MatsyaP* 93 and 94 do without it.

In *VaikhSmS* 3, 21 which deals with the *varṣavardhana* and *śatābhiṣeka* rites the observation is made: 'When for the man who practises thus, eighty years and eight months reckoned according to the solar year have passed, he has seen a thousand moons. Such a man they call an embodiment of Brahman [because he is] intent upon holy rites and highly meritorious'. At the end of the same section it reads: 'It is recognized [in the sacred tradition: *iti vijñāyate*] that the ceremony of increasing the year serves to obtain the same result as is secured by the horse sacrifice'. This evaluation of the rite does not occur in the other *Grhyasūtras* in which provision is made for these ceremonies (*G* 2, 8, 19 f.; *Śāṅkh.* 1, 25, 10 f.; *B* 3, 7; *K* 36, 12; 14). In view of the high standing of the horse sacrifice it was, no doubt, to lay special stress on the importance attached to it in the Vaikhāṇasa community, a fact which is also apparent from the great length at which it is dealt with. In this it concurs with a text of a later date such as the *Saṃskāraratnamālā* (pp. 877 ff.).

After describing the Uddālaka-penance, which is to be performed by those who have lost the competence for learning the Sāvitrī, the compiler of *VaikhSmS* 2, 3 explains the efficacy of this observance and similar penances: 'Having either performed this [penance], or the final bath after a horse sacrifice, or a *vrātyastoma*,⁵⁹ and having again performed the sacraments from the *garbhādhāna* onwards, those who have been deprived of the Sāvitrī are purified and may be initiated; thus it is recognized [in the sacred scriptures: *iti vijñāyate*]'.

At the end of the section on the religious duties of the newly married pair (3, 5) it reads: 'With what remains of the oblation he satiates a learned Brahman, and when he has given him a bull, he is free from debt; thus it is

⁵⁹ See J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, I, 158 f.

recognized'.⁶⁰ The stereotyped phrase *iti vijñāyate* occurs also, to emphasize the traditional character of a ritual statement, in 4, 2 asserting the equivalence of the life of two types of householder distinguished in this community (8, 5)⁶¹ with the duties of the householder (*gārhaṣṭhyam dharmam*) as taught by the 'orthodox' authorities; 4, 4 in justification of a much simplified performance of the *Aṣṭakā* ceremonies (similarly, 5, 3), the parallel text *BGS* 2, 11 omitting at the end of the section any such reference to authority⁶²; 4, 9 after the description of the *Āśvayujī* rite which—as has already been observed—is curiously enough performed in propitiation of Bhava and other manifestations of Rudra, *ĀśvGS* 2, 2 treating a parallel rite without any appeal to authority; 4, 12 (worship of Viṣṇu).⁶³ At the end of the section on 'cremation in case of distress or calamity' (*āpaddāhyam*; 5, 9) the whole rite is—in contradistinction to *BPS* 3, 7—explicitly attributed to the sacred tradition (*ity āpaddāhyam vijñāyate*).

It stands to reason that the ritualists furnish us with occasional justifications of details concerning cult images, sanctuaries, modes of worship. 'According to Bhṛgu, a standing image causes a long life, well-being, renown: therefore one has to make standing images . . . Thus it is known' (*KāśyS* 39). The construction and consecration of the frame of an image requires the sprinkling of the sacrificer: 'by this act he is freed from evil, as it is said' (*KāśyS* 43; *Marīci* 31, p. 190). See also, e.g., *KāśyS* 54.

A comparatively long motivation of the ritual use of a formula is also furnished in *VaiKhSmS* 5, 1 describing the funeral rites. 'When the time of one's parting [from the world] has come, one should—discerning two paths [and knowing] that one reaches without returning [to earthly existence] the place (*padam*) of Brahman by the bright [part of the fire], the day, the six months [constituting] the northern course of the sun, the fire, and the light, but that one returns [again to the earth] after having reached this light of the moon by the dark smoke [of the fire], the night, the six months [that constitute] the southern course of the sun—mutter the luminous appeasement-formulae'.⁶⁴ The recitation, in a low tone, of this *jyotiṣmatī śānti* is to annihilate the bad consequence of dying during the night, the decreasing half of the lunar revolution, etc. The stanzas constituting the appeasement are *TS* 1, 4, 34 *jyotiṣmatīm tvā sādayāmi, jyotiṣkṛtām tvā s°, jyotirvidam tvā s°, . . .* 'I place thee that hast light, . . . that makest light, . . . that findest light, . . . that shinest, . . . that burnest, . . . that flashest, . . .'. These formulae—which also occur at *MS* 2, 13, 19; 165, 6; *KS* 40, 4, and at *ĀpSS* 17, 6, 4; *MSS* 6, 2, 3, 3, 7 are prescribed in connexion with twelve bricks called 'the luminous', and in *TĀ* 3, 19, 1 are to be addressed to the fuel of the cremation fire, the commentary explaining *poṣaṇe dāhe viniyuktāni yajūṃsi* 'formulae destined for fostering [and] cremating'—are followed by *TB* 3, 7, 6, 22 *udyānn adyā vi no bhaya pitā putrēbhyo yāthā/ dīrghāyutvāsya heṣiṣe tāsyā no dehi sūrya/ udyānn adyā mitramaha/ ārōhann ūttarām divaṃ hṛdrogām māma sūrya harimāṇam ca nāśaya* (cf. *RVKh.* 1, 50, 2 f.) 'Rising, assign to us [what is our portion] like a father to his sons, for thou art the lord of (= disposest of) length of life; deign to give us thereof, O Sun. Rising today, O thou who hast plenty of

⁶⁰ This expression is also used in prescriptions (*VaiKhSmS* 3, 11).

⁶¹ This point will be discussed elsewhere.

⁶² The mantra *ā mā gantu pitaro . . .* has been borrowed from Baudhāyana (W. Caland, *Altindischer Ahnencult*, Leiden, 1893, 259).

⁶³ I refer to another publication.

⁶⁴ For some comment see Caland, *Sacred books*, p. 123, n. 13.

friends, ascending heaven on high, destroy, O Sun, my heartache and [my] jaundice'. These stanzas are recited by the sacrificer who at a definite point of the ritual is to worship the sun: *ĀpŚS* 4, 15, 1. The last formula of the series is the well-known stanza *RV* 1, 50, 10; *VS* 20, 21, etc. 'Looking, above darkness, upon the loftier light we have come to the Sun, the god among the gods, the highest light'. It is clear that the Vaikhānasa have aptly combined some mantras which relate to light, to the salutary effect of sunlight, and to victory over darkness and the arrival at the light of the sun, to use them in a ritual act on behalf of those who are on the verge of death and hope to go, by the way of light, to Brahman's abode.

The relation between Viṣṇu who is the Ātman and the gods (Brahmā, Rudra, Indra, etc. who are Its emanations) and the possibility of God manifesting himself in the heart of the man who meditates on Him are elucidated by Kāśyapa, ch. 24, as follows: 'Just as fire, which is present everywhere in the kindling-block, flames up at one point only, because it is produced there by friction, thus is the manifestation of the Omnipresent One; just as the air, which is everywhere, is manifested only by fanning, thus God is manifested in the heart by the friction of meditation'. The eclectic⁶⁵ passage in which this elucidation is contained refers to some well-known similes used to explain God's immanent presence which, however, escapes the ordinary man, the author utilizing a simile which occurs already in the *BĀU* 2, 1, 20 'Just as small sparks issue from fire, even so from this Ātman come forth all breaths, all worlds, all divinities . . .'. Cf. also *AtriS* 31, 64.

Explicit references to the śruti (*AtriS* 35, 40) or 'ancient tradition'—abounding also in the ritual writings of other denominations—are therefore no great surprise: *KāśyS* 42 '[in making the frame of an image] one should follow the ancient traditions (*purāṇam*) of the authorities (*paurāṇika*). If another method is followed, it will cause very evil consequences for kingdom, king and sacrificer'. It should therefore be constructed prudently and carefully. If, for instance, the measures are too small, all the children will die. The well-known Indian predilection for casuistry and systematization did not fail the author.

The ancient seers, Bhṛgu and the others, who are in later times the great authorities on ritual, are also credited with the 'discovery' of the exact measures of Nārāyaṇa's image (*KāśyS* 50). Their prescriptions should be followed, because Agni is God's mouth, the sky His head, the atmosphere His navel If the image does not completely answer to the requirements of the Vaikhānasa tradition about the ideal body and its symbolism, as described in the handbooks, its construction will be ineffective. The image should, moreover, be constructed in such a manner that it is worth observing constantly, because devotion is the only motive for its construction: 'Even Brahmā designs this image on the walls of his mind, with the brush of devotion, and gazes at Him' (*KāśyS* 51). 'Anything done by men without devotion is fruitless' (ibid. 55). 'Lack of materials will result in lack of material goods; omission of some ritual in lack of good karman; omission of mantras in lack of study and lifetime; lack in faith and devotion in lack of everything' (ibid. 61). Sometimes an important statement is attributed to the great sage Mārkaṇḍeya, a man of great spiritual energy (*mahātejāḥ*: *AtriS* 31, 65), who is even, on a par with Śrī, Brahmā, Bhṛgu, Dhātār, and other divine or divinized beings, invoked with a mantra of his own (36, 14); cf. also 37, 36. The fundamental truth that Nārāyaṇa pervades all existence inside and outside is even

⁶⁵ See Goudriaan, op. cit., 91.

communicated on the authority of the most eminent or virtuous sages who in their turn for it refer to the śruti (*AtriS* 35, 40). Another category of authorities quoted, e.g., by Atri, 5, 6 ff. is the *dharmavidāḥ* 'the experts in the socio-ritual norms and customs'.

VI

Sometimes, however, a religious truth is so self-evident that no authorities are cited. At the end of a section dealing with the location of temples and pedestals (ch. 36) Kāśyapa, before proceeding to discuss the relevant iconography, reminds us of the birth of incarnations out of the Lord Nārāyaṇa, which are needed to guard the world and the images of which should be established for worship; they are by their very form fit for their function. It is man's duty to contribute to the actualization of the divine energy in the sphere of the *hic et nunc*, or as Kāśyapa (ch. 1) has it: 'Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa is satisfied by Veda study, śrauta rites and asceticism, and as the Lord of Sacrifice He is praised by means of a sacrifice'.

In other cases the author adds a motivation or elucidation to his ritual expositions without referring to an authority. As these passages shed some light on the philosophical and theological views of his community they are worth quoting also. The existence of two kinds of sacraments, one of the new-born child and one of the deceased (*VaikhSmS* 7, 1), is elucidated by the statement that through the first one gains this world, through the second, the yonder world. Further on, the performance of the cremation is explicitly said to lead to all prosperity and well-being; the one who omits this sacrament will incur guilt. These views are in their general bearing not peculiar to the Vaikhānasas—*BPS* 3, 1, 4 states that there are two *samśkāras* which, just as a debt, must be discharged, viz. that on birth and that on death—but they obviously wished to express them clearly. The formulation moreover deviates from the remarks on the purpose of the *samśkāras* made by Yājñavalkya (1, 13), Manu (2, 27 f.), and other authorities⁶⁶ who assert that the former class of *samśkāras* removes the defects transmitted from parents. The funeral rites are generally believed to be required for the good of the deceased as well as the bereaved relatives.

The man who after the cremation of his parents wears, as is prescribed in *VaikhSmS* 5, 7, an old garment⁶⁷ and, likewise for a whole year, keeps the vow of a Veda student (i.e. of chastity and abstaining from honey, betel, and the use of sandals, a parasol, and garlands) is, the text adds, observing a *pitr̥vrata* and is likely to increase the welfare of his family. As to the formulation there is, as far as I am able to see, no exact parallel in other texts,⁶⁸ *MānAnugS* 23 (cf. also *ĀśvGS* 4, 6, 16) even prescribing that one should wear pure or bright garments.⁶⁹ Neither the two *Gṛhyasūtras* which deal with the impurity after cremation (*Āśv.* 4, 6; *P* 3, 10), nor the dharma work of Gautama (14) provide us with a motivation of the observances prescribed. The *punardahana*—repeated burning of the bones of a dead body the morning after the cremation proper—is in *VaikhSmS* 5, 6 said to be auspicious (*maṅgalyam*) for the family of the deceased to whose share, moreover, will fall the highest abode (*uttarā ca*

⁶⁶ See Kane, op. cit., II, 191 f.

⁶⁷ For mourners and similar tabooed persons clad in rags see J. G. Frazer, *The golden bough*, abbr. ed., reprinted, London, 1957, 271.

⁶⁸ cf. e.g. J. J. Meyer, *Über das Wesen der altindischen Rechtsschriften*, Leipzig, 1927, 366.

⁶⁹ For some details see W. Caland, *Die altindischen Toten- und Bestattungsgebräuche*, Amsterdam, 1896, 81 ff.; A. Hillebrandt, *Ritualliteratur*, Strassburg, 1897, 89 f.

gatiḥ bhavati). The motivation is intelligible because the custom described in this section of the elaborate chapters on the funeral rites deviates from what seems to have been usual for the other Taittirīyas who knew, it is true, a *punardahana*, but could not, like the Vaikhānasas (5, 7) collect the bones afterwards because this second cremation was meant to destroy all mortal remains.⁷⁰ In the description of the *Aṣṭakā* ceremonies⁷¹ (*VaikhSmS* 4, 4) the author inserts first the statement that the Fathers are satisfied when the Brahmins who are fed are satisfied, and further on the information that, if the appropriate acts are not performed with respect to the All-gods (i.e. the Brahmins who represent these), the *rākṣasas* would take away the essence of the sacrificial food or the merit of the act. It may be remembered that there is considerable divergence of opinion as to the gods of these rites (see e.g. *GGŚ* 3, 10, 1, Agni, the Pitaras, Prajāpati, the Ṛtus or the Viśve Devāḥ).⁷²

In describing the duties of the Veda student and his relations with his teacher the author observes (*VaikhSmS* 2, 8): 'The teacher must guard his pupil for he incurs the evil done by the pupil. He gives up a pupil who by no means fulfils his duties. If he abandons his wife, son, or pupil in any other case he goes to hell'. This comment deviates from the statement occurring in *ĀpDhS* 1, 2, 8, 27.⁷³

VaikhSmS 3, 9: a woman who has, after menstruation, bathed, etc., should look at no other man, but at her husband. 'For a woman, who has bathed after her period, obtains such offspring as the man is whom she looks at.' Looking at a person or an object means contact with his or its properties,⁷⁴ but the injunction is not mentioned in the section on menstruating women contained in *TS* 2, 5, 1.⁷⁵

In a similar way the *Vāstusavana* is (3, 16) motivated by the remark that the ritual of founding and occupying a new house is to effectuate the purity of the dwelling. Other *Gṛhyasūtras*, though dwelling at greater length on this rite, make no mention of this purpose, although it may be implied in the mantras and terminology used (*Āp.* 17; *Hir.* 1, 27 f.; *Śāṅkh.* 3, 2 ff.; *P* 3, 4; *G* 4, 7).⁷⁶ The post-Vedic *Matsyapurāṇa*, however, does not omit mentioning the *Vāstuśānti* and stating that it is to avert evil (*sarvadoṣāpanuttaye*, 268, 33 ff.).

The conclusion may therefore be that, although it is—in harmony with the general character of the sūtra text—the author's object to set forth the ritual acts, the mantras to be used, and the order in which acts and mantras are to occur, he occasionally informs his readers of their doctrinal basis. To a similar end he sometimes inserts a brief piece of information on the purpose of the acts. Thus (2, 2) a pitcher is filled with water, and *darbha*, sprouts, a handful of *kuśa* grass, and some ornaments are put in it 'in order to drive away the evil' (*pāpmano 'pahatyai*). The purificatory and apotropaeic character of the act is obvious in the phrase *pāpmano 'pahatyai* occurring e.g. in *TB* 2, 7, 18, 4; *PB* 12, 10, 22; 13, 5, 22; 14, 5, 22; *ŚB* 13, 4, 1, 13. The *grahaśānti* (appeasement of the planets) is introduced by what in the Hindu view is a truism: worldly existence is dependent on these heavenly bodies which are therefore to be worshipped (*VaikhSmS* 4, 13); for a statement of the same tenor see *Yājñ.* 1, 308.

⁷⁰ Caland, op. cit., 111.

⁷¹ Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, I, 137.

⁷² For particulars see Kane, op. cit., IV, Poona, 1953, 356.

⁷³ See also R. K. Mookerji, *Ancient Indian education*, London, 1947, 201.

⁷⁴ J. Gonda, *Eye and gaze in the Veda*, Amsterdam, 1969, 32, 57, 69.

⁷⁵ Nor in Kane's survey, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, II, 802 ff.

⁷⁶ But compare *Āśv.* 2, 7, 9, 12; *Kh.* 4, 2, 14 f.

Passing mention may finally be made of some truths of morals, etc., inserted in corroboration of an injunction in the chapters on *dharma* 10, 1 ff.; e.g. he avoids speaking falsely: there is no greater evil than untruthfulness, no higher merit than truthfulness. Similar observations occur in the ritual manuals of the later authorities.

A prospect of access to Viṣṇu's world (*loka*) and the state of eternal bliss is not rarely held out to those who perform one of the important ceremonies. Sometimes however an author gives the advice to execute his instructions in a particular meritorious way, for instance in God's nearness, that is, in His temple. See e.g. *AtriS* 64, 53. Often no motivation is given, but now and then it is emphasized that any act performed for God and any service devotedly rendered to Him—even listening to the beneficial rules for Viṣṇu's worship—will result in the much-desired liberation from all mundane evil (*ibid.* 65, 80 ff.). The force of the mythic example is actualized in cases such as *AtriS* 47, 97: by performing Viṣṇu's festival many seers and royal seers of yore and others obtained access to His highest abode; *ibid.* 64, 3 (cf. 51 f.): the divine guardians of the quarters of the universe and famous mythical kings gained their functions by Hari's grace, because they performed Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa's great consecration-by-unction by which up to the present day kings will gain this earth and a complete lifetime. Elsewhere it is the ancients (*purātanāḥ*) who regarded, for instance, five days as sacred to Viṣṇu, Śravaṇa day, the twelfth day of the months' light and dark halves, and the days of full and new moon (*AtriS* 47, 2). It may be recalled that among these ancients are the authors of *TS* 4, 4, 10, 1 and *TB* 1, 5, 4, 4 who mention Viṣṇu as the deity of the nakṣatra *śroṇa* (*śravaṇa*).⁷⁷ Mythological or legendary events are, in the usual way, adduced to sanction a custom, e.g. Viṣṇu's image should be placed on the bank of water in the vicinity of His temple, which is equal to the Ganges because Viṣṇu has bathed His feet in it (*KāśyS* 90). Sometimes a motivation is only given in passing. The well-known fear of the evil consequences of spilling holy water or sacred food is explicitly laid at the root of the injunction to handle it carefully (*AtriS* 78, 45 f.). Homage on the twelfth day of *mārgaśīrṣa* gives complete success because Kamalā's lord (Viṣṇu) is identical with that month (*AtriS* 47, 48 f.), which, of course, is the best of all months (*ibid.* 47, 72).⁷⁸

In innumerable cases, however, there is no motivation at all, the statements of the ritualists being in tacit agreement with the doctrinal traditions of Viṣṇuism in general or their denomination in particular. When Atri (65, 56 f.)⁷⁹ holds out the prospect of communion with God (*sāyujyam*) to those who present objects of gold, of closeness to Him (*sāmīpyam*) to those who give silver, of access to Viṣṇu's world (*sālokyam*) to those who offer brass or copper, this correlation between gifts and rewards cannot be disconnected from the distinction between, and evolution of, different kinds or states of emancipation (*sālokyam*, existence in the same sphere as God, *sāmīpyam*, existence in proximity to Him, and *sāyujyam*, being merged in Him) assumed by various religious teachers.⁸⁰

This is not to say that the ritualists always limit themselves at best to passing remarks. In ch. 24, Kāśyapa furnishes us with an elaborate theological

⁷⁷ For further references see W. Kirfel, *Die Kosmographie der Inder*, Bonn/Leipzig, 1920, 36; Kane, op. cit., v, Pt. 1, Poona, 1958, 501.

⁷⁸ Purāṇical traditions are different: Kirfel, op. cit., 131, 134.

⁷⁹ Compare also *AtriS* 45, 86 ff.

⁸⁰ See e.g. S. Dasgupta, *A history of Indian philosophy*, III, Cambridge, 1940, 442 f.; A. Gail, *Bhakti im Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, Wiesbaden, 1969, 41 f.

explanation of the invocation to Viṣṇu, the request addressed to him to be present for worship in the temple, and the dismissal at the end of the ceremonies. 'The theologians (*brahmavādināḥ*) say: the invocation, the request to be present, and dismissal of Viṣṇu—this is only a delight of His own will, for He pervades everything like firmness pervades the iron, fragrance the buds, butter the milk, water the honey, and sesamum oil the sesamum. He is like the sky, and He is unperceivable even to Brahmā and the other gods.' This is confirmed by the Scriptures which teach: 'Smaller than the smallest, greater than the greatest is the Self' (*TA* 10, 10, 1); 'this whole universe is only the Self' (*MāṇḍU* 2); 'there [in Brahman] is no diversity whatever' (*BĀU* 4, 4, 19). The Highest Person (*puruṣottamah*) is seen as in a thousand mirrors; His manifoldness is like the reflections of the sun in water, or like the echoes from the mountains . . .'. After a continued digression on these fundamentals of theopanism⁸¹ and of the belief in God's immanence the author observes that 'therefore a knower of the Self (*ātmavid*), who has this insight, should invite God into [His image] and worship Him . . .'.

Before instructing his readers in the details of imaginative meditation—if one strives for release one should characterize God only by His Conch (explained as the essence of all worlds, residing in the heart of all living beings as the Goose) and Disc (explained as the *samsāra*), etc.—the same author, while subscribing to (the traditional monistic) tradition, dwells, in a comparatively long philosophical digression (in ch. 35), upon the nature of Brahman the highest manifestation of which is Viṣṇu, adding a theological exposition of God's other manifestations, adopting, in substantiation of his argument, the Śivaite text *ŚvU* 4, 10 and subjoining the doctrine that God's *śakti*, i.e. Śrī, who is the cause of all empirical existence, should be worshipped together with Him. Śrī's nature and function are—in words reminiscent of *BhG* 9, 7 f.; 13, 20 f.; 29—called to mind also in ch. 38 to introduce the rules about the establishment of her image: She is Nature (*prakṛti*), productive activity, and the performer of all acts, the soul (*puruṣa*) experiencing the *guṇas* which are born from Nature. That is why Śrī should be adored, and gained. Up to one's death one should long for her, the loving Mother of Viṣṇu's followers. If the goddess has been duly established, all forms of misfortune will vanish. It is in this connexion worth observing that the ritualists sometimes include philosophical expatiations in their works which are not found in the *Sūtra*. Thus Atri 31, 33 digresses on the nature of the Highest Self which is identical with Nārāyaṇa and the transcendent Brahman. In prescribing a method of meditating Kāśyapa (ch. 65) quotes, in no less than 105 *pratīkas*, the whole of the *Pāramātmikopaniṣad* which extols Viṣṇu's cosmical nature.

In other cases a theoretical digression is of the well-known recommendatory type and clearly meant to teach the devotees their duties, and to remind them that the rites are a religious, social, and economic necessity and lead to the fulfilment of desires (e.g. *KāśyS* 90).

Appeasement of evil influences being one of the main purposes of ritual acts, Vaikhāṇasa authors join their colleagues of other denominations in recommending various kinds of expiations. Kāśyapa (92) quotes experts of the highest reality (*brahmavettārah*) according to whom 'damage (*doṣaḥ*) becomes appeased by a *śānti* rite just as the harm of a sick person is cured by medicinal herbs'. While the various omissions, defects, and transgressions to be corrected reflect the adherence of the community to widespread popular

⁸¹ R. Otto, *Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa*, Jena, 1923, 85 f.

belief (92 ff.), this quotation gives us some information on their ideas of the essence of the relative rites, which here are also permeated by a Viṣṇuite spirit. In ch. 18 Kāśyapa inserts a similar passage: the half-śloka 'The house is the root of living beings just as the body is the root of incarnated souls'—which probably is a quotation—is to introduce the prescriptions regarding the construction of a house. While systematizing much traditional popular belief, and being in itself in general agreement with our other sources of information on this subject, chapters 18 and 19 evince their Viṣṇuite character in that they enjoin the devotee to construct also a sanctuary and establish in it Viṣṇu, the two goddesses Śrī and Bhūmī, and the seers Bhṛgu and Mārkaṇḍeya, who should be worshipped daily and regularly, because 'all good things will fall to the share of him in whose house they are adored'. A dwelling which is devoid of this adoration is equal to that of an outcaste; respectable Brahmans should not enter it. The *Sūtra* (3, 16 f.) did not mention this sanctuary. A bit of information may also be imparted by occasional pseudo-etymologies, e.g. the *bali* oblations have their name from the fact that they increase the strength (*balam*) of the gods, etc. (*KāśyS* 101). There is, however, no point in dwelling on features which are not typically Vaikhānasa.